



Team Training

STS-79 crew spends hours preparing for link up with Mir

The STS-79 mission, set to lift-off in September, will carry an experienced crew of six that have spent the majority of its time training for the fourth shuttle docking to the Russian Mir Space Station. Commander Bill Readdy, Pilot Terry Wilcutt and Mission Specialists Tom Akers, Jay Apt and Carl Walz, along with Cosmonaut Researcher John Blaha, trained at the JSC Weightless Environmental Training Facility and Kennedy Space Center's Payload Processing Facility to prepare for shuttle emergencies and learn the Spacehab payload systems. In addition to training in the states, Blaha spent a majority of his time in Russia preparing to become a member of Mir 22. He returned home recently to participate in another training exercise, the Terminal Countdown Demonstration Test, set for the end of August.

Training consist of a variety of activities. Crew members must learn how to space walk and repair shuttle systems even if there is no planned space walk. They must learn how to bail out of the shuttle's escape hatch and to survive in the water.

Crew members also must learn the systems they will be working with during the nine day mission. The Spacehab module will carry a variety of experiments, equipment and supplies for the Russian outpost and its occupants. Life science experiments

will study the effects of space on crew members—in particular, Cosmonaut Researcher Shannon Lucid, who will return to Earth with the STS-79 crew after a record-breaking stay on Mir.

Throughout the training, the crew took photos to share. From top to bottom left to right:

1) Apt spends time in the WETF preparing for a space walk. Although no space walk is scheduled for this mission, the crew must be prepared to venture into the cold environment of space to repair shuttle systems.

2) From left, Walz, Wilcutt, Readdy, Apt and Akers practice escaping the shuttle in their ascent entry suits.

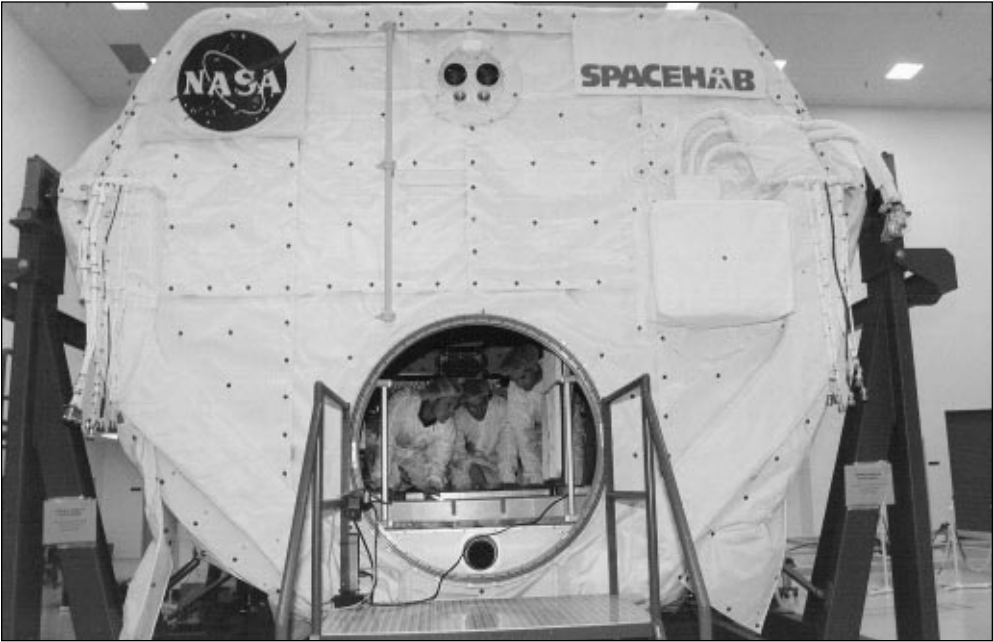
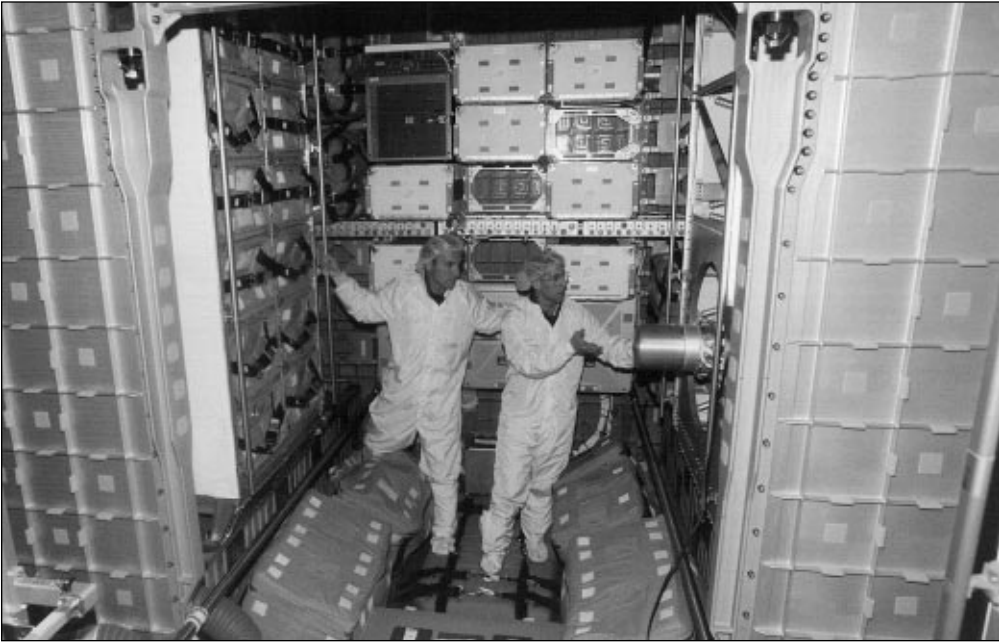
3) Readdy practices water survival training in the WETF in case the crew must abandon a mission over water.

4) At KSC, Walz, left, and Apt examine the interior of the Spacehab module. STS-79 will be the first flight of a double Spacehab and will allow more supplies and equipment to be taken to Mir while still allowing room for scientific research.

5) Chris Jaskolka of McDonnell Douglas, right, shows Walz, left, and Apt the layout of the Spacehab.

6) Walz prepares to help a team member escape the orbiter during crew escape training in Bldg. 9.

7) Apt, left, and Walz check out some of the equipment aboard the Spacehab module. □



KSC Photos
JSC Photos by
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